

BEWARE OF MODERNISTIC “EVANGELICAL” SCHOLARSHIP

September 18, 2001 (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061-0368, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org) - In our series on articles on *Fundamentalism, Modernism, and New Evangelicalism* (see the Evangelical section of the End Times Apostasy Database at the Way of Life web site), we document the great downgrade in doctrine which has occurred within Evangelicalism during the past 50 years. The problem continues to increase.

The following amazing excerpt from *The Jesus Crisis: The Inroads of Historical Criticism into Evangelical Scholarship* (Kregel, 1998) reveals how deeply evangelicals have been infected with theological modernism:

“Outspoken evangelical critics have engaged in the same type of dehistoricizing activity as the Jesus Seminar people with whom they differ. If they were to organize among themselves their own evangelical ‘Jesus Seminar,’ the following is a sampling of the issues they would vote on, most of which they would probably pass:

1. The author of Matthew, not Jesus, created the Sermon on the Mount.
2. The commissioning of the Twelve in Matthew 10 is a group of instructions compiled and organized by the author of the first gospel, not spoken by Jesus on a single occasion.
3. The parable accounts of Matthew 13 and Mark 4 are anthologies of parables that Jesus uttered on separate occasions.
4. Jesus did not preach the Olivet Discourse in its entirety, as found in three of the gospel accounts.
5. Jesus gave His teaching on divorce and remarriage without the exception clauses found in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9.
6. In Matthew 19:16-17, the writer changed the words of Jesus and the rich man either to obtain a different emphasis or to avoid a theological problem involved in the wording of Mark’s and Luke’s accounts of the same event.
7. The scribes and Pharisees were in reality decent people whom Matthew painted in an entirely negative light because of his personal bias against them.
8. The genealogies of Jesus in Matthew 1 and Luke 3 are figures of speech and not accurate records of Jesus’ physical and/or legal lineage.
9. The magi who, according to Matthew 2, visited the child Jesus after His birth are fictional, not real, characters.
10. Jesus uttered only three or four of the eight or nine beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-12.

“Recognizably, the listed conclusions impinge upon the historical accuracy of the gospel records. Various evangelicals have opted for the stated unhistorical choice in each of the suggested instances. Granted, their reduction of historical precision in the Gospels is not the wholesale repudiation of historical data as is that of the original Jesus Seminar, but that it is a repudiation is undeniable. An acceptance of imprecision is even more noticeable in light of the fact that the above questions are only the tip of the iceberg. An exhaustive list would reach staggering proportions” (Robert L. Thomas and F. David Farnell, *The Jesus Crisis*, pp. 14,15).

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